

Πάντα Δοκιμάζει.

A SERMON

Treating of the

Tryall of all Things

by the HOLY SCRIPTURES,

The confest Rule of

FAITH and **PRACTICE**,

SHEWING

The Deplorable **ABUSE** of that Rule;

With an Attempt touching the **Examen** of

CEREMONIES.

Delivered in St. Paul's Cathedral November 8.
being the xxi. Sunday after Trinity.

Καλὸς ὁ Νόμος ἰδὼν τις αὐτοῦ ΝΟΜΙΜΩΣ Χῆται· 1 ad Tim. v. 8.

Εἰ τις δοκῇ εὐλογεῖν τι, ἐκπῶ ἐν τῷ ὕμνῳ καὶ ᾠδῇ ψαλμοῦ καὶ ᾠδῇ γυναι· 1 ad Co.
rinth. viii. 2.

By J. G.

L O N D O N,

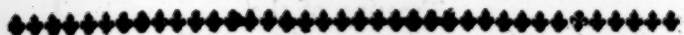
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A SERMON



Tryal of all things

Imprimatur

Nov. 30. 1663.

Tho. Grigg, *Rev. in*
Christo P. D. Humfr.
Episc. Lond. & Sacr.
Domest.

Printed by J. Sturges at the Sign of the

Three Kings in St. Pauls Church

at the Sign of the Three Kings



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To the Right Reverend Father in G O D,
Humphry by Divine Providence Lord Bishop
of London, our honoured Diocesan.

MY LORD,

WHat is the state and condition of this Land,
and how lamented by serious men your Lord-
ship knows full well. If I appear an unwor-
thy means of contributing some Charisma toward
the settling or healing of my Country, I should reach
the highest of my ambition. Your Lordship perceives
that all could not be said which was requisite in the
abstract of an hour. The greatest argument that
staves off some good minded people is, the pretence
of dissolute life; which if perfectly true, were an
inconsequence, seeing 'tis exprest by our Lord, that the
Rabbies which say, and do not, as long as they sit in
Moses's Chair ought to be heard. Howbeit, we hope
we can exhibite not a few who shall set an example
to them in all true piety of conversation, provided
that affectation of sanctity and turbulency carry not
away the name. My Lord, Either they are Decei-
vers or we; and because 'tis so, I thought I could
not acquit my self better, then by publishing the
Churches principles to all the World, whereby She
A 2 will.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

~~will discover, yea and anathematize the contrary~~
Hereſie. All that I have aſſerted is, our Reason, our
Faith, and our Order, that men may be in ſome way
of uſing their Bibles toward Truth and Edification,
Spiritual Growth in Duty and Charity, not toward
Offences and Diviſions, which by me (by the Grace of
God) ſhall not come in to the Church. 'Tis good to
have a care of the Woe through whom---The A-
poſtle that bids us hold faſt what is good, in the Text
bids us hold faſt our Creed, the *ἰστούμεν* and our Di-
ſcipline Apoſtolick *τὰς παραδόσεις*. And this I reckon was
not caſual. It is a prodigious thing when the unlearn-
ed and unſtable cannot endure to hear that the Scri-
pture may be wreſted, when they are the only men
that do it, and that (Lord open their eyes!) to
their own damnation. 'Tis a brave thing this ſelf-
conceit, being illuminate in our own eyes; true
knowledge is ready to puffe up, falſe knowledge puff-
eth up more. Let Truth ariſe, and let Error vaniſh
from our Cities: Let the unity of the Spirit find a
Dwelling amongſt us that would be ſpiritual. Up-
on the prudent purſuance of which we ſhall pray for
the Governors of the Church, and amongſt them for
your Lordſhip, as your Lordſhips moſt humbly de-
voted,

J. GOAD.



I THESS. V. XXI.

Prove all things : Hold fast that which is good.

AS in the early Spring you cannot but observe, walking in a Forrest, the pleasant evidences of the season, by a Primrose here, and another there, and not far off a knot crowding together ; so in the Book of God, you may observe here a Lesson, and there a second, and anon a whole Posie of flowers (as in this very chapter) grow at your feet, and breath themselves forth in their several expirations. But as in this allusion, it oft times happens there is some difficulty in gathering, the flower growing perhaps within the empalement of a thorny hedge, or prickly bush ; so we do begin to discern some difficulty also, some thorn or scruple which may threaten us with a raze or a wound, unless we are more cautious in gathering.

The difficulty arises from the state of Religion, which should be one unquestion'd unmov'd profession ; but when we see a Nation have so lost themselves, as in a Forrest indeed, every one in a several path, *luring* perhaps one to another, but not knowing *how* to come together, nor how to get out : when I shall see the lowest members of Christs Body learn of *Korah* so far, as to take upon them to mutine against their Superiours, to define contrary to their Governours, to devise Governments, and to pronounce *Babylon* and *Anathema* to all that dissent, and these men have their eyes as well as others (for, *would we pull out the eyes of these men?* said *Korah*) And this so far, that our very Civil Peace is en-

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dangered

dangered every hour with designs of blood and confusion; but that our eyes are upon God, who we hope notwithstanding our provocations (of another nature God knows then what is supposed) will vouchsafe to preserve us.

When all this which ought to be bemoan'd by every one that understands Reason or Religion, all this I say shall be thought to be the genuine Issue of the Apostles Precept in our Text; and the pretext shall be, *What have they done?* but only in Conscience to God, and love to their own souls, *Proved all things*; Proved the Doctrines of the Great Ones, Proved the Government, and Proved all the rabble of their Ceremonies, and they have evidently found the contrary to be *good*; What is left, but that we also should *prove* with them, and so come over to them, or else clear up that mis-understanding of this Apostolick exhortation, which hath occasioned, and will justify this dis-union.

And this is our designe at this time, through Gods much implored assistance, to shew that these words are the Remedy and Antidote rightly understood, not any cause or occasion of distemper; That if we *prove* and *examine* all things after the Apostles way, we shall come to settlement and unity, finde the wayes of Truth, and Peace, and Righteousness; we should all light upon this τὸ καλὸν in the Text, and *hold it fast*, as the Apostle exhorts us to do; to which yet he would not exhort us, but that he supposes it not impossible to finde it.

The words in the verse will not take up much time for a critical enquiry into their meaning; the word δοκιμαζεν doth indeed here signifie what is there rendred, *Prove*, i. e. Try and Examine, and consequently censure and judge according to their difference; as in that known parallel, 1 John IV. 1. *Believe not every spirit,*
but

but try the spirits: whether they are of God, or no: Only the *wisdom* must be restrained to a peculiar state of things; Not all things in Philosophy, or the Mathematicques, the Conclusions, Problems, Experiments; for these are exoticte to the Christian, though they be *τὸ καλὸν* too in their kind: But *all* that respect the *spiritual* concern, all Doctrines and Principles that belong to Faith and good Manners, that's the *τὸ καλὸν* may be found, the Moral and Spiritual good to be *held fast*, when found, by Faith and a tenacious observance.

Now since all Acts of Examen and Probation are made with respect to some *Rule*; as in Angles the Square, in Levels the Plumb-line, in Measures the Standard; our chief enquiry must be, what is this *Rule* according to which our Examen must proceed? And secondly, Who are the proper Judges to sit on these things? Whether every one of the Laity, or Clergie only? To whom for certain it only belongs in a *special* manner, *Rev. II. 2.* Upon which account some very Learned and Christian men have restrain'd the Precept here to *them* only.

Yet I shall not deny them (nor do they I think) their right of Tryal and Judgement, even as far as they themselves shall venture, when they shall be rightly instructed in the true nature of application of the Rule on one hand (which is our business) and consider soberly and meekly the more petite measures of their own Parts and Graces; seeing God dispenseth not his Talents to all equally, but divideth to each man severally as he pleaseth.

I say, I shall not deny them, nor indeed can I, the way I go, provided they use the Rule according to the Authors minde, and withal keep themselves within the bounds that God and Nature hath set them, as they will answer dearly to God for the contrary, who will

have every member to know his own station; as lusty and liking, and thriving as he may be in his own esteem.

Howbeit, since the Act of Examining and Proving in the Text, supposing the Rule (with the Spirit of God toward the admission and love of it) is an Act of the Understanding, it is clear that the *rational* man is the proper Judge here regarded, the Scripture many times referring things even to *our Judgment*, 1 Cor. x. 15. Luke xii. 57. and all the world knows that Judgment is an Act of the Understanding.

For as in the first admittance of the Rule we did not take it up upon an easie credulity, as the Atheist upbraids us, but upon most weighty moment abundantly courting and pressing us for our assent; so after that assent, the same *Reason* which draws conclusions for her own use, is able to turn and taste of those which she finds drawn to her hand. But in this her Estimate of so sacred a thing as Religion, she is not a little jealous and cautious; because a Drug or Jewel the more pretious it is, the more do men study how to adulterate it.

The Case is plain; Religion is not the Fools Gospel, it despises not the Fool neither, provided he be a docile, i.e. a wise Fool. The Body consists not of Babes only, it hath its men, and the Scriptures call upon us to be *men* in understanding, that we may approve *τα δαπάνητα* Phil. i. *the things that are excellent* (for so *Hesychius* explains the word); *in all judgment*, *ἐν παντί αἰσθήσει*, according to that, Psal. 119. *Teach me good judgment and knowledge* *דעוה* saith the Hebrew; a spiritual taste to distinguish, joyn'd in that place with *נתיב* which the LXX render by *αἰσθήσεις*.

No man saies, at least I cannot, that Reason can make out the mysteries of Religion, the *Holy Trinity*, &c. But

But that Religion hath to do with Reason, appears, because no other creature is capable of Religion, and no Law of God can lay hold of us without it: *Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit Adultery*, doth not reach us but upon these *reasonable* Suppositions; 1. That God speaks to All; 2. That We are some of that number.

For that Reason makes inference from the sacred Text, observe the Apostle, who having occasion to apply that place of Scripture to our Lord Christ, [*He hath put all things under his feet*] steps in and sayes, that *'Tis Manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him*; 1 Cor.xv.27. Manifest to what? but to Reason: as in another place, *'Tis manifest that we can carry nothing out of this world*; Manifest to sense it self.

But then how our Lord himself uses arguments and deductions from the Text. 'Tis excellent for every one that loves the praxis of Reason, to consider how he handles the Pharisees and Sadducees, and worsts them, as in case of the Sabbath; *Do the Priests* (saith he) *do such butcherly work* as kill and flay the sacrifice for the ends of God, and may not my Disciples grinde an ear of corn for the ends of nature? S.*Matth*.xii.5. May David's Hunger entrench upon the Shew-bread, and must we starve in the midst of a Corn-field? *ver*.3. and if Circumcision (when he had heal'd on the Sabbath) that *wounding* Ceremony be no violation, a *healing* Miracle sure (saith he) is no breach, S.*Job*.vii.23.

Thus in the question of the Souls Immortality, he argues S.*Matth*.xii.32. If God entitled himself to be the God of *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, then sure they have a perpetual Being and subsistence with their God; for 'tis no Title of Honour to be the *God of the Dead*, those that

8 *Holy Scriptures confest to be the Rule.*

that are not the better for him, as They that have no subsistence are not. *Ergo.*

And once more in the case of Blasphemy, *S. Job. x. 34. Jesus answered, Is it not written in your Law, I said you are Gods ? If he call them Gods to whom the Word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him, &c.*

Nay since one way of Probation of all our Hopes, our ever blessed Jesus to be the Messias, lies in deduction from the Prophecies of the Old Testament, it will be but wrong to intelligent men to say any more.

The reasonable man then is constituted the Judge, after examination and proof to bring in his Inference. What is the Rule now? The Answer that is justly expected here is the *Scriptures*, the Word of God and of his Prophets, the Law and the Gospel, the Law of *Moses* and the Law of Christ. And this Answer takes its date from the time in which the Church of God first owned the Canon as now it stands: For however it pleased God to tutour the Patriarchs by Tradition and other Revelations, and to found the Christian Church by the oral Preaching of the Apostles, it is evident that since he hath committed Both Testaments to Writing, seeing 'tis his Word, it is our RULE, and being such, no question hath lost nothing by the writing. All confessing that God had designs of safety and conservation of that his Word to the respective after-ages, when first he began the writing part himself.

I might adde to this, that *ONLY* Scripture is the Rule, but then I must crave leave to distinguish and take heed that the word [*Only*] be a just exclusive of what is *extraneous* to Scripture, not to have any malignancy against ought that hath *natural intimacy* and consanguinity with it.

Of

Of this nature are these: (Let notional men dispute how they differ from Scripture, or from one another:) the constant *Belief* of the Church, the constant *Publick Practice*, the *Authority* of the Church, the Summaries of Faith, commonly called the *Creed*, the example of Saints of God, the great *example* of our Lord Jesus, the common *Tradition* and sense of mankind, those notices of good and evill implanted in our souls by our great Creator God blessed for ever, commonly called *Reſa Ratio*, or the light of Nature.

Some of which are *contain'd* in the Scriptures as the Pith and Marrow of the same, as the Creed, and the example of Christ, some are *supposed* to the whole body, as right Reason, and the light of Nature, and some things are *naturally annexed* to the vigor of the Scriptures, *viz.* the authority and practice of the Church in all points which the Scriptures have put into her hand.

Against any of which it will be unjust and violent to *oppose* the Scriptures upon this account, because they all *agree* in a sweet and necessary subordination (at least) one to the other: and 'tis a material rule *subordinata non pugnant* subordinates are not to be set at variance.

The Scriptures that were left to the Church as a conservatory of Faith, since Faith is but One, must be left also by Gods design as a conservatory of unity. But seeing that is lost among us, it is too apparent, that it is even with the Scriptures, as with other Rules and Instruments Mathematical, they are exact and infallible in themselves, but yet every one knows not how to use them.

The error arises, because Mathematical Instruments are not assumed by any, without the precognition of
some

some *prolepses* and *postulata* premised to their due operation. To give you a more clear example in the *Sun*, which is the *Rule*, the *only Rule* and Index of the hour of the day, so certain that all other Machines must be corrected by it: but no man can find that hour of the day by the Sun it self, unless he knows before-hand the Horizon, which is East, and which is West, yea, and the Meridian also. Secondly, These Rules must be applyed to their proper Correlatives the Ruler for Lines, the Square for Angles; not contrary the Rule for an Angle, or the Square for a Line, they were not given us to that purpose. Scripture is a rule according to the Writers intent, of *Faith*, Not of *Ceremonies*, Nor of every dictate of Nature, and Nature again is a rule of *practice* and conscience *within* its sphere, not of things *beyond* it, matters of meer Faith and mystery. For want of some such directions as these I say the error arises, and doth not the Scripture attest the same, that men know not how to use the Scriptures? Doth not that learned Apostle S. Paul say of some that call themselves Teachers of the Law, *Which yet understand not what they say, nor whereof they confidently affirm*, 1 Tim. 1. 7. Doth not the Scripture confess, that the Scripture is and may be *wrested* by such and such persons, 11 Pet. 1. 16. Those certainly that know not how to use them, Doth it not once again say, *That the Law* (the Scripture) *is holy and good*; but then it must be used *regularly* lawfully 1 Tim. 1. 8. to bring us to Christ, not to draw us from him, and so in like manner to bring us to Unity, not to draw us from it.

And is not the Scripture then used not lawfully, when we wilfully exclude all other Guides, or Lights, or Rules which the Scriptures themselves own and abet, and impose on all that will take her word.

These

These things if true (as 'tis pity they should not for Truth, and Peace, and Order sake) we should quickly learn to search the Wounds of the Church, and tent them, and by Gods grace heal them.

For all contrary pleas of *schism* and *disunion* would fall to the ground, since it would be as unreasonable to say, I will be guided by *Scripture* only, not regarding the *Light of Nature*, or common dictates of Conscience, I will be sway'd by *Scripture* only, not respecting any *Creeeds* or summaries of Faith, how antient soever, I will be judged by *Scripture* only, defying all manner of *publick Testimony* or *Tradition*, whether it hath footing in the *Scripture* or no: *Scripture* shall be my *Rule*, not the *example* of Christ (for many cry up the one, that little think they are obliged to the other) This upon deliberation will appear to be q.d. I will be guided by the *Sun* alone, not by the imaginary *East* and *West*, or the humane invention of the *Meridian*: I will build my House level by the Plumb-line, not regarding which is up, and which is down.

Now since we are engaged to prove *all* things matters of *Faith*, *Practice*, and *Ceremonies* also, you are to take notice, (that we may *duely* prove all things) that there is a difference between the former and latter: that the difference stands thus, as I trust we shall make it good; that the *Scripture* which is a *distinct Rule* for Faith and Practice, is *not such* for matters of *Discipline*. It is only *general* for this; as *viz.* When it commands Decency, and Order, and Obedience, but in *particular* it is not; whence a distinct testimony of *Scripture* is not to be called for by our *Posers* for every Ecclesiastical Usage, nay it is ignorant and absurd so to think: but in the other a *distinct Rule* is indeed acknowledged. Yet again with these cautions, that in matters of Faith no

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interpretation of Scripture must thwart the *Creed*, or in matters of *Practice* cross-grain the *Light of Nature*.

To begin with this first. The *Light of Nature* and *Natural Principles* are *supposed* to the holy Scriptures, as Unit is to Numbers, or the Dawning of the day to the Sun-rise, a Beam of the Divine Conscience shot into the soul in the day of the Creation, when God said to the little World, *Let there be light, and there was light*, and God saw that it was good. And though great was the loss of that light in our first Father, yet the growing darkness reach'd not so far (without question) as to extinguish *all* that was good; the very *shame* that was left him was a sign of *some* good remains: he knew that disobedience was nakedness, his fear and flying for the same shew that he was not past all grace, he was not delivered up *eternum damnationem* No Divine ever said so.

Natural Principles therefore remain in us; and if they should not, without doubt we should all run like Beasts into the Wilderness, with *Nebuchadnezzar* in the head of us: for by these all mankind know, (since I question whether the Sea-Monsters in our shape be of the same race with us) *know*, I say, *Good and Evil*, that there is a GOD, a Law, a Vengeance, a Worship, and we give more then guesses at what is truly *Honest*, and *Just*, and *Modest*, what *becomes* our natures, and what *misbecomes* us *Unjust*, *Inhumane*, and *Unholy* also.

For the Heathen always could, and can to this day tell us, what is the iniquity of *Perjury* and *Parricide*, *Sacrilege* and *Fraud*, the iniquity of unhallowing holy Rites and Times by servile Work, or by impure Addresses.

Hence the Apostle tells us, that all the works of the flesh are *manifest*, Gal. v. to the rational Conscience. 'Tis true, it must be enlightened by faith to know

know *Idolatry, Witchcraft, or Heresie* (at least) to be works of darkness, but for the rest they are all *manifest* to meer Reason, *Adultery, Fornication, Strife, Sedition, Hatred, Envyings, Murthers, Drunkenness, and such like.*

Adde that great known place, *Rom. ii. 14, 15. The Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the Law, and Having not the Law, they are a Law unto themselves. Having not the Books of Moses, they are a Moses to themselves, because many of them made conscience of these sinful works of the flesh now reckoned up.*

To speak plain then, This *Law of Nature* is a *Rule*, no prejudice to *Scripture*: For if it shall be asked, Whether it be *sin* to transgress it? who sees not that the answer must be, yea: that all *unnatural* men are *impious*, which is a perfect demonstration, that this *Law* is a *Rule*, because as we may sin against the *Scripture*, so we may sin against it. Nay who knows not that it is an aggravation of sin, the more grossely and palpably it affronts this *innate* light, such as the *unnatural* lusts, *Rom. i.* the *unnatural* burning of their children to that cursed Idol *Moloch*, and the like.

Upon which it is evident, that the Word of God cannot, according to Gods intent, be universally *opposed* to this *Law*, because *this* is also Gods, *Gods own Law*, written in the Table of our hearts, as the other (if yet it be the other) was in Tables of Stone. I may well say, if yet it be the other: For all Divines that I know confess, that the *Ten Commandments* for the Moral part are all *one* with the *Primæval Law of Nature*, Now there is no opposing of God to God, Redemption to Creation, Grace to Nature, the one is *more excellent* then the other, but they are at no hand *opposite*, one does not overthrow the other.

Here if it be asked, Whether all *Principles* and *Conclusions* rational are compris'd in *Scripture*, (a material Quere toward the understanding of our Texts business) the answer (for the *conclusions*) must be Negative. The Scriptures do charge many of them upon us with this dreadful caution, *Ego Dominus, Thou shalt not curse the Deaf, I am the Lord; or put a stumbling-block before the Blind, I am the Lord*: yet the *conclusions* drawn from Natural light are *Infinite*, as Christs Miracles, which Saint John saith the Scriptures could not hold. Be judge your selves, when every true and wholesome Lesson in *Practick Philosophy*, yea all the grave and righteous Laws of *Policies* and Nations are nought else but deductions from the *Law of Nature*: and who can undertake to find then *distinctly* in the holy Scriptures, *distinctly*, I say; for in the *general* 'tis true they may be found, especially above other places in that famous Text of Saint Paul to his *Philippians*, chap. iv. 8. where he conjures them to whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are grave, whatsoever things are pure, just, lovely, and of good report, if there be any vertue or peace, to think on them.

But *distinctly* and *expresly* to find every wholesome Law of this *Land* in the Law or Gospel, I appeal to the knowing in the Law, if they will say it; it is enough, that they are not *contrary*, and 'tis a sign there is *God* in them, because not *contrary* to Scripture, according to our principle above. And

It is pity but Christians should understand these things, as long as they are the words of Truth and Soberness. The holy *Scripture* is careful to teach us to do our duties to *God*, to pray, to *hope* on him; but it is not always solicitous to teach us in what *common sense* can sufficiently tutour us. I instance in one of many, *viz.*
Consulting

Consulting the Physician, or using any good means toward our recovery. The Son of *Sirach* indeed minds us of it, but he is *Apocryphal*, and the *Canonical* in the case of *Aſa* ſeems to condemn it: and ſo for the uſe of all natural means in general. 'Tis ridiculous to preſs me for a Text of Scripture, if *Right Reason* and *Humanity* ſufficiently inſtructs us: For Reason is a *Talent* alſo, of which God will take his account.

Hence the *Libertines* muſt learn their no Plea for Fornication, and Drunkenneſs, and Gluttony, and Revelling, and ſelf-Murthers, nor Pride and Haughtineſs, although poſſibly they are not expreſt in the Decalogue. Nor muſt men venture in the Topick of Matrimony on *Poligamy*, Marriage of Kin, Matches precipitate or unequal, or haſty ſecond Matching within the dayes of mourning for the firſt, although they fancy no Text that condemns them. The like may be ſaid for *Sacrilege* (which ſure many think no Text forbids the Chriſtian) breaking open of Graves, &c. yea all immodeſt offensive *Cynical* behaviour to civil Company, remembering that they are condemned in the general, *Charity* behaveth not it ſelf unſeemly, 1 Cor.xiii. and *Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men*, Rom.xii.17. And if in the ſpecial they are not found, let them take notice that Saint Paul hath an *Et cetera* for them, *ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῃ* and ſuch like; a place to be ſtudied by all conſciencious perſons, Gal.v.21.

All that the *Light of Nature* teaches muſt be ſuppoſed and granted beforehand by him that means to read the Scriptures. What ſaith the Apoſtle in the caſe of Ruſſian hair, *Doth not even nature it ſelf teach you*, ſaith he, 1 Cor.xi.14. q.d. Suppoſe the Scripture be ſilent, doth not that ſufficiently teach us.

Let Interpreters be conſulted on thoſe words, with thoſe.

those of *Rom. xiv. ult.* *Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin,* and the more knowing will be satisfied.

To put all out of doubt, when our Saviour was accused of *breaking a Text*, does he not retreat to sound *Reason*, thereby shewing us, that *Scripture* must seldom or never (excepting in the *mysterious* parts, as we said above) be constrain'd against it. I have heal'd one on the Sabbath day, 'tis true, and you condemn me, but without *reason*: so *Which of you having an Oxe or an Ass fallen into a pit, will not straightway help it out on the Sabbath day*, *S. Luke xiv. 5.* and again, *Is it lawful to do good, or to do evil.*

And I desire that our Saviour may be observed, whether, when he saith, *He came not to destroy the Law*; he doth not mean the *Moral* and *Natural Law* also. I am sure that place of *Hosea*, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice.* Whatever *Hosea* meant, he applies it to *mercy* to ones self in the case of the *shew-bread*, *S. Mat. xii. 7.* Secondly, I desire it be observed, whether our Saviour throwes not the name of *Hypocrite* on those pretences mainly, which may be proved to be *not sincere* by the strength of *Reason*; as to deny *Tribute to Cæsar*, and yet see the *superscription*, to wipe the *outside*, and let the *inside* be filthy, to behold the *mote* in my brothers eye, and not consider the *beam* in my own eye, to be uncovered in the presence of my *Master*, and not to shew the same reverence in the presence of my *God*. I could adde more, but I shall be too long on this point; only this must not be omitted: That *Religion* without *Reason* may carry us into a *Frenzy*. I would this Land of ours did not shew you the truth of what I deliver. The Spirit of *God* is no *frantick Spirit*, but the Spirit of love and a sound mind, *2 Tim. i. 7.* The *Apostle* asks his disorderly *Corinthians* what they mean, *Will not they*

they say that you are mad, 1 Cor. xiv. 21. The Apostle would not have us be of a crackt Religion.

If then the *Light of Nature* implanted in us be such a Light, which we must have recourse to when the case serves, if that must also with the holy *Scriptures* have some share in *proving* all things, then we are something toward a settlement, we have what will keep us *sober* at least, *οὐκ ἐν τῷ ἁλίῳ*, as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. xii. 3*. We shall put up no hideous impudent pretences that shall dare to thwart this Light; we shall not be wild or brutish with the untamed Heifers, or the wild As that snuffes in the Wilderness; we shall not be like the populous Fish of the Sea that have no Ruler; we shall not preach down *Crowns* and *Scepters*, the Ordinance of God and Nature, and set that new Magistrate the *People* above them. On pretence of *Freedom* we shall not bring in *Confusion*, and invade other mens Estates on the Plea of *Saintship*; we shall not from the example of *Jael*, *Phineas*, and the *Canaanite* preach hideous *Massacres* of all the *Loyal Party*, to such numerous Congregations which are able to do the feat; we shall not with those *Fanaticks* in *Jeremy vii. 10*. believe that we can possibly be *redeemed even to commit such abominations*; we shall have none strip themselves of Shame and Garments, and display themselves *Naked* through our once civil Streets; none will defie the civilities of a *salute*: we shall not study to do things quite contrary to *humanity*, only because all mankind that were in their wits had done so before; we shall not forget we are *men*, because we are *fellow creatures*; we shall save our *natures*, if we do not save our *souls*.

And so much for the first particular, *Prove all things*, which concern *Conscience* by the *Rule* of holy *Scripture*, but at no hand excluding the *Light* of Reason or Nature.

Our

Our second particular treats of the *proof* in matters of *Faith*, Faith strictly so called: in which sense not every point of Spiritual Knowledge is an Article of Faith, *i. e.* necessary to salvation: the Scriptures are the *Rule* of both Faith and Spiritual Knowledge, but so as their interpretation keep a fair correspondence with the *Rule* of Faith, the *Creed*, the publick confession of Christ from the first minute of Christianity, made in the Church by all the Candidates of the holy *Baptism*, as you hear by the *Professio* in the first Person, *I believe*, &c. Which confession is brought down to after Ages; not in Tables of Stone, saith Saint *Hierome*, but in the hearts of them that believe unto righteousness, and in the mouths of those that have made confession to salvation: For to this very practice doth the *Apostle* there referre, *Rom. x.*

The greatest searchers into the annals of the Church *Voss. de Symb.* confess, that the *Apostles Creed*, as now it stands, was in use above twelve hundred years ago, *viz.* before four hundred years after Christ. Let us take their grant, and let us ask them in the Name of Christ; Was the *Apostles Creed* then thought an *Innovation*: such inferences giddy people are apt to make. But if we look into the Scriptures, there we shall find that *Catechism* into the Faith of Christ, and *Confession* of the same is elder then the very name of *Christian*, *Acts xi. 26.* as it must be, because nothing else could give them that name, Elder by some years then the writings of the New Testament. Saint *Lukes Theophilus* was catechis'd into Christian Religion, before the *Evangelist* wrote his *Gospel*, *S. Luke i. 4.*

The *Creed* and the summe of Christianity differ *secundum magis & minus*, a straiter and a larger compass, the *Creed* believes the Son of God, the summe of

of Christianity saith *Quintus*, of one substance with the Father. This believes the Resurrection of the Body, that explains it self a Shining and *Glorious Body*; they differ not in substance, but as the Bud and the Rose in Explication only.

Now the summe of Christianity is the *Immediate Rule* of Faith, the Scriptures being the *Rule* quatenus They contain in them this great Pawn and Pledg, the grand *Depositum* of our Religion. This *Depositum* was left with the Church, and also committed to writing. Left with the Church; thence the Apostle exhorts in in several places to hold it fast. So 2 Tim.i.13. *Hold fast the Form of sound words in Faith and Love which is in Christ Jesus.* Observe first, *ὑποτύπωσις*, a *Form* of sound words, a *Draught*, a *Breviate*, (so *Ptolomy* calls his *Maps* of the World *ὑποτύπωσις*) a *Form* and a *Rule*; Thus is our *L O R D's Prayer* a *Form* of sound words, and a *Rule* (viz.) of Prayer; the *Decalogue* a *Form* of sound words, and a *Rule* of Life. Observe 2^{ly} a *Form* of sound words, or rather sound *Articles* and Propositions, *ὑγιαίνοντες λόγους*, for single words are not capable of soundness or of the contrary. Thirdly, the Contents of this Form, the *Credenda* and *Agenda*, as all Creeds rightly understood do contain Matters of Faith and Matters of *Practise*, witness that *Article* of Remission of sins *Gloriously* and *Catholickly* explained by, *I believe one Baptisme to Remission of sins.* Now these *Credenda* and *Agenda* the Apostle calls *Faith* and *Love* which is in Christ Jesus. Next, that this Form must be held fast, that's some signe it was of no unreasonable extent; it must be graffed first before it can be held fast: such as doth not overlade the *Memorie*, as the Apostle seems to speak, 1 Cor.xv.2. where he is explicating

ting the *Articles* of the Creed : *ut varijs* Construe it how you please, it makes for us.

Voss, de
36. Symb.
dep. 3. p. 14

Now to tell us that at first, it was enough for the Baptized to profess Belief in the Lord Jesus, or the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *Act. ii. ch. viii. 12, &c.* is contrary to those very *Scriptures* and *Reason*. For he that believeth in the Lord Jesus, doth not believe in those *two words* only, but in all those *Great Things* concerning him; All that he hath any way done and said to the Redemption of the world, his immaculate Conception, his Passion, Resurrection, Mission of the Spirit, and, the end of all, the blessed Remission of our sins. And thus we have a Little Creed at least.

And 'tis evident that the very Institution of Christ points at a larger Form, when he hath appointed all Baptized Persons to profess Belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *S. Matth. xxviii.* Belief in their Names too, which in the First Person cannot signifie less then God the Father Almighty, Creator of the World, and that's all the *Apostles Creed* expresses; and the Third Person the Holy Ghost cannot imply less then the Lord and Giver of Spiritual Life, as the *Nicene Creed* hath it, which yet the *Apostles Creed* spares to express.

It must not be denied but that the *Antient* Confessions of the Church of God in several places did not agree to every *title* or syllable: the *East* and *Western* Church had several Forms, as to this matter; nay, that of *Aquileia* in the same *Italy* differ'd saith *Ruffinus* from that at *Rome*.

But let it be considered that there was no Confession recited in publick but was in order to Baptisme, yea and what presupposed a Larger Catechisme of the Novice into the Mysteries and Duties of Religion; and then where will

The Creed a Form Apostolique, and fr. the beginning. 19
will be the variety, or will it not be supplied out of the Principles premised to a perfect Agreement?

To illustrate this, bating the *Descent* into Hell, as the *Romane Creed* did, and the *Communion* of Saints with *Aquileia*, of which we cannot discourse here what is there in the *Creed*, but is witnessed to have been there, and *naturally must* be from the beginning?

For could any Confession leave out the Article of *Remission* of sin? What, and be a Confession in order to *Baptisme*? Did any omit the Article of the *Resurrection*? Nay. 'Tis confessed none did, and good reason too; for without this Article our Religion were a *Fable*, 1 Cor. xv. 14. or the *Incarnation* of Jesus, or his *Death*, or coming to *Judgment*, could any Confession or *Catechisme* leave these out?

Nay further, Is it not *natural* for a new Convert in the day of his Addition to the *Church*, to profess *Sancta Ecclesia*, the *Holy Church* that was then descending into the Laver of Baptism the Sacrament of *Initiation* into that *Church*, therefore *Holy*, because none but the washed and the sanctified did enter? Or was the word *Catholique Church* a new Addition (as is pretended) toward the prevention of *Heresie*? this is but suspected by those that it may be consider not the word *Καθολικὴ* in *S. Peters* and *S. James's* Epistles: But as to the thing, it is evident they believed in the *Apostolique*, and what is *Apostolique throughout the World*, but *Catholique*?

What then if the *Apostles Creed*, as it is call'd, were not a *Form* agreed by them *totidem syllabis*; yet the *Effect* and substance was agreed among them before ever they departed from *Jerusalem* to go preach to every Creature? Do not the *Church Monuments* tell us so

much? See *Ruffinus in Symbol.* S. *Ambros. ep.* 81. *Hieron. ep. ad Pamach.* quoted by *Vossius disp.* 1. *sect.* 13. Nay you that will take the paines of a Pilgrimage to *Jerusalem* may be shewn the very place where the *Fame* says they made this Agreement. See Mr *Sandys* and Mr *Morisons* Relations.

But why trifle we? Did the Apostles trow ye preach *Christ* at *Jerusalem*? And what is preaching of *Christ* but preaching *such Articles* concerning him, his *Dying* for our sins, *Resurrection*, and *Repentance* unto Remission of *sins*? Must we prove this out of *Scripture*? Nothing more easie. See *Act.* viii. 5. *cum* 12. xxviii. 31. *1 Cor.* i. 23. xv. 12. *Eph.* vv. 19, 20. *1 Cor.* iii. 2. *Gal.* iii. 1. Did not they then going abroad preach the *same Christ*, and the *same Gospel*, i. the *same Covenant* and *Bodie* of *Articles*? How is it called *Eph.* xv. 5. *One Faith*, *indivisa in se & divisa à quolibet alio*? What is meant by the *Unitie* of that *spirit* which preacht *Christ* farr and near? *Eph.* iv. 3. And how is heed taken least they should preach *2 Cor.* xi. 4. *several Jesuses*, any Form of Doctrine that should be dissonant from the Truth, as a false scheme of the Grace of God? Hence that of *1 Pet.* v. 12. the *true Grace of God wherein ye stand*? Did they preach the *Name* of *Christ* & not the *Thing*? Did they preach him any how? or only did they protest but *One* saving way, as the Truth is in *Jesus*, *Eph.* iv. 21. not introducing any false *Article*, for then 'tis a danger *Christ may profit nothing*, *Gal.* v. 2. Nor omitting any true one, especially that Great Article of *REPENTANCE* involved in Remission of sins; for the Apostle hopes, whatever some may teach, that His Charge will not *learn Christ* so: so falsely, &c. *Eph.* iv. 19. What need we look for further presumptions, when

when as Christs Institution is extant to his Apostles, going to teach all Nations, and to Baptize them (Catechize them first) into the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This only is enough to evidence it.

What is the issue then? The summe of our Religion is a *Rule*, then is the *Creed* also a *Rule* of Faith. The first appears from several places of the Scripture, ---*You have obeyed from the heart that Form of Doctrine*, Rom.vi.17. That *Form* is the *Rule* of their Faith and Obedience. A *Rule* I say of Faith; for if any man shall teach *contrary to it*, *κατὰ τὴν διδασκαλίαν*, transgress that *Rule*, he must be marked for one that causes *Divisions* and *Heresies* in the Church, Rom.xvi.17. Yea, if an Angel from heaven shall dare to do it, he shall have his *anathema* as the Hereticks have, Gal.i. Hence 'tis expressly called *κατὰ τὴν τὴν Rule*, as I could make it out, Gal.vi.16.

The second appears from the illustrious Testimony of the *Primitive* uncorrupted Church, in which solemnly and deliberately the *Creed* is noted as (a) *Regulā Fidei*, there being no other summe of Christianity extant but that. And that you may see *Tertullian* lookt upon it as *the Rule*, you shall finde him (b) *trying* the Spirits, and the Doctrines, and the false Prophets, yea and their false Gospels too by it. To this purpose he formally repeats it to the Heretick as *universally* accepted from the beginning. *Marcion* forsooth did believe a several God in the Old Testament and in the New, and had a false Gospel coyn'd under the name of S. *Luke*. This Antient Writer (c) repels both, because the *Creed* began *I believe in One God*, &c. And this was within lesse then (d) 100 years after S. *John* the Evangelist.

(a) Tertul;
de Trin.

(b) adverb.
Marcion.
1.4.

(c) Prax.
contr. P. &
de Virg.ve-
land.

(d) ab ini-
tio Evan-
gelii decu-
curisse ad-

And
verb. Prax.

And had not Saint *John* the Evangelist taught him and us this very Method of Examen? who is he that bids us not *believe every Spirit*, but *try the Spirits*, whether they are of God or no, 1 *John* iv. 1. Now how must that be done? even by the *Articles of our Creed*, by the *Rules* of the Catholick Faith, say the Contents of that Chapter. You shall hear him. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God*: That's good; How? *Every Spirit that confesseth that Iesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God*, vers. 2. and every Spirit that confesseth not, is not of God. He gives his *Criterion* from an *Article* of the Creed against the Hereticks of that Time which oppugned it; for so the words following import, *This is that Spirit of Antichrist*, vers. 3. *that even now already is in the World*. He doth not, 'tis true, give *One Catholick Rule* to try all *Heresies* by; for how many *Hereticks* were there, that were so cunning afterward, as to confess the Incarnation, as Saint *Austin* observes on that place: but he giveth one *pro tempore*, sufficient at that time, and from the Creed he fetcheth it.

But the holy Apostle *Peter* speaks of *all the Creed*: For when he had seasonably admonish'd us, that some do abuse and *wrest* the holy Scriptures, he gives us an account *who they are*, viz. the *unlearned*, and the *unstable*; which can be none else but those that have not sufficiently *learned*, and are not strongly *confirmed* in the *fundamental Lessons* of Christianity, 2 *Pet.* iii. 16.

The Scripture then is the *un-erring Rule* of Faith, but so that its interpretation must have regard to the Rule and *symbole* of our Faith: the reasons are the same as before, because they sweetly agree; the one is *contai'nd* in the other, the one is *suppos'd* by the other, as we said of the *Law of Nature*. They are mutual helps
one

one to the other. The *Scriptures* were given, that our Faith might not be *interlop'd*, and the *Creed* was given that the *Scripture* might not be *wrested*, Neither can be spared by the faithful.

So here's no clashing; the *Decalogue* is the *Rule*, but not to shut out the *Pentateuch*. The five Books of *Moses* are the *Rule*, but not to exclude the *Ten Commandments*. Nothing must exclude its own *Quintessence*.

And is not this necessary? No question God saw it very necessary; and the advantages are undeniable these: First, The *Creed* is one compact abridgement of fundamentals, which in the *Scripture* lie as in the Myne here and there resperfed. Secondly, It is plain and easie; but the *Scriptures* have many things hard to be understood: So said Saint Peter, when yet the Book of the *Revelation* was not written. Hence the old Hereticks few or none denied the *Scriptures*, but the *Creed* many disowned.

After all this are we not nearer to *Unity* now? Yes: For if this *Rule* were believed to be a *Rule* and *Form* preserved to us from the beginning, we should none of us dream of new Lights, and stand amazed at every puffe of doctrine from this, or that, or the other illuminate.

We should not reckon salvation by any Name but *Jesus*, nor by that neither unless rightly understood.

We should not divide Christ into Parishes, piece-meal, making so many *Catechisms* as *Congregations*, and *Christianities* as *Pulpits*.

We should none of us dare to scruple the very God-head of our Blessed Lord and the Worlds *Author* founded in it; we should not out-face the Church of God in her main mysterie; whereby she is distinguished from the

the *Jewish Synagogue*, or the *Turkish Mosque*.

We should not dare to *contract* this great salvation, and deny the *universality* of Christs merits.

We shall not abuse the grace of God, either to *presume* on a profane, or to be *secure* in an indifferent life.

We should regard and respect the *known* wayes of Christ, *Baptism*, &c. not dreaming of an invisible Spirit to twitch us to Heaven by the hair of the head.

There is none of us would make it an *Article*, much less place *all* our *saving Faith* in an infallible absolute assurance of our well-doing. We should rather *tremble* at the brightness of Him that is to come judge Quick and Dead, and *tremble* again at our sacrilegious breaches of our *Vow* in Baptism, and our indevout repentances therefore.

We should not imagine no necessity of *holiness* toward eternal remission of sins, we should not be afraid of *good Works*, Thing, nor Name.

We should talk *less* of the *Spirit*, and live *more* by it. We should look upon Christianity as a kind of pure *Angelical* life, the *exertion* of the *Spirit* of God received in *Baptism*.

We should believe a *Church*, be such *men* in understanding as to *know* our *Mother*, and so *natural* as to reverence her.

We should not make such a vast *Hiatus* in Church-History, as to reckon none from the *Apostles* to our dayes: for if we reckon *any*, we could not place *Reformation* in a wilful departure from it in every thing where *humour* prompts us to do that easie thing of *wresting Scripture*.

And (to see that I would be impartial) neither should

should we out of a pretended esteem of this Apostolick *Form*, content our selves with a scanty measure of the *knowledge* of Christ : Seeing there is Duty and Knowledge, and to *believe in Christ* rightly understood is a World of both. And thus much for proving of matters of Faith.

Now for *Ceremony* and *Order*, the endless Dispute in this Island. How shall we *prove* this ? what *Rule* have we for these ? Here, as no where else, do I look that my authority should be accepted : How can it, when the Churches is denied ? a very demonstration from so private a person shall not pass.

Yet I deem these things cannot be banished out of the Church : My reason is, all *Beauty* lies in *Order*, all *Decency* in *Ceremony*.

With *Order* there is *Beauty* even in the Furrowes of the Field, and without it there is none in the Beds of a Garden, *Irrational* is the despoiling of *Order*, hence such care taken, least the Swine break into the Garden.

God by the very Creation is a *God of Order*, Gen.i. *And behold all was very good ; altogether* as well as *each* particular. Besides his Title of *Lord of Hosts* shews as much : Every one that knows what belongs to an *Army*, knows without *Order* 'tis nothing.

Yea and *Nature* her self is not without her *Ceremonies*, the Leaves of the Trees, and the Flowers of the Field ; *Solomon* in all his *Ceremony* could not out-strip them : and so *decent* are these, that without them the Trees look bald, and the Earth withers into *desert*.

So in *Animals*, the House-Cock hath his *spur* and *Crest*, the Ensigns of Chivalry, the rest of the Birds have their *Habits* and *Liveries*, the Turkies neck is

fac'd with Scarlet, and the Lapwing hath his *Cap of Maintenance*.

Yet nearer, The *hair* of our Face and *Beard* is but a *Ceremony*, viz. a mark of distinction and decency : and these instances that I have given, are so much to the purpose, that 'tis known they have the *Fate* of *Ceremonies*, to wit, to be thought *superfluous*, as the Goats Beard, &c. Yet given no question by the wise Creator for use and ornament ; but we that perceive not the Divine Reason herein, think them idle luxuriant *Excrescencies*.

We know what our Saviour hath express'd against *Traditions*, and we do more then partly believe him : He doth at no hand condemn any *Tradition* or *Rite* of the Elders *directly* ; mark that, but such only as manifestly thwart the Word of God ; such are the *unnatural* neglect of maintenance of our needy Parents upon a religious pretence of *Corban*, S. Mark vii. 11. As for *washing of the hands* he condemneth it, but not *directly*, as if unlawful in it self, because no where commanded, (as S. Chrysostome uncautelously lets fall) but *indirectly*, i.e. in such a person whose *scrupulous Hypocrite* could make great conscience for the less, and none of the greater. Thus elsewhere he condemneth the *Pharisees*, yea pronounceth *woe* against them in several cases, Matth. xxiii. First, *Woe to you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites, for you compass Sea and Land to make a Proselyte : A woe* (and yet no fault in the World) *All Religion that is good, or believes it self to be good will do so. But what followes ? You make him a child of Hell twofold more then yourselves.* Again, *Woe to you Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites, because you garnish the Tombs of the Prophets, and say, If we had been in the dayes*

dayes of our Fathers, &c. No faults again, none I hope in that repentant expression, *If we*, &c. But chiefly that of *tithing Mint and Cummin*, which our Saviour saith they ought to have observed, and yet *woe to the Scribes* for such tithing, whilst they omit the great matters of the Law, S. Matth.xxiii.23.

And if I much mistake not, our Saviour puts this difference and *distinction* himself, the phrase of the Text being clearly altered in one from what it was in the other. In the matter of *Corban* our Saviour charges them home with *making void Gods Law* ἡκουσάτε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Θεοῦ, This is sinful and impudent; but in the Washing it is onely ἀπέστη τὸν νόμον, they are taxed for *laying aside the Law* of God, the Law of greater matters, S. Mark vii.8.

But doth our Saviour deny any where, That he which maketh conscience of the *great* matters of the Law, may be (if he will) punctual in the *less*. If the Pharisees heart should be clean wash'd, would the washing of his hands defile him? Let any man judge what our Saviour did, and all his Disciples at the Marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee*, where there were *six Water-pots* set for this Ceremony, yea and other times also. As an innocent Ceremony doth not *sanctifie* a man, so neither doth it *defile* him. Let us take heed of hypocrisy, and secure the greater matters, and the less are free for us: *To the clean all things are clean*, Tit.i.13.

Ceremonies may be superciliously censur'd (poor things) but as the *Herald* says, In civil matters there can be no *State or Majesty*, so in Religion there can be no *Devotion*, no *solemnity* without them.

All wise men know, that Religion is not a *meer reserve*, nothing outward: For how then shall our Bro-

ther be edified? How shall our Religion be *professed*? How *solemnly* professed? If there be in Religion a *solemnity*, there must be some such thing as a becoming Ceremony. The unhappy *Covenant* could not be the *solemn* League and Covenant, without the assumption of an outward Ceremony, *lifting up of the hand to swear*.

And I appeal to any man that hath a heart humbly to serve God, whether when he composeth himself to devout *pouring out* of his soul to God, he can forbear the *natural expression* of his eye and hand with heart. *Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in the Heavens*, Lam.iii.41. I ask whether the *Publican* could forbear in his holy indignation against his enemy (himself) to *smite his breast*. There is a *natural spring* in our bodies, that moves our hands, and eyes, and knees according to our inward affection. And as I remember, pious *Anatomists* give the reason why Nature made our eyes with such *Muscles*, and our knees with such a *Flexure*.

God must be worshipped in Spirit and Truth, therefore he may not be worshipped by *Ceremony* only: But must he therefore be worshipped without *any*? It is enough for me that our blessed Saviour, who best knew his own meaning used them, when in the *solemn* time of his last Devotion, he *ador'd on his* || face, yea and on the *Cross* it self, when he delivered up his torment-ed spirit to the Father, the Text saith, He * *Bowed his head, and gave up the Ghost*.

They that will say a Ceremony is just *nothing*, should be ask'd, how they would take it, if any one should *spit* in their faces, 'tis but the *Ceremony* of Defiance. Or if Christs Disciples should *shake off the dust of their feet* for a testimony against them, *Matth.x.14*.

I am

|| S. Matth.
xxvi.39.

* S. John
xix.30.

I am sure our Saviour expects such testimonies from us. See what he saith to his friend *Simon*, when the ceremonious Woman came in that wiped his feet; *Simon, I have something to say to thee.* He accuses him of the defect of a triple Ceremony, and then brings in the Woman for a fairer example; *Thou gave me no water to wash my feet, this Woman hath washed me with her tears,* thou gavest me no *kiss*, this Woman hath not ceased to *kiss my feet*; my head with oyl thou didst not anoint, this Woman hath *anointed my feet with ointment*: And what is the conclusion? *He loved little, and she loved much.* So true is it, there is no devotion without them.

S. Luke
vii.44.

Our Adversaries therefore would have done ill to have lived in the dayes of Christs flesh, who might perhaps have been contented to have cried *Hosanna*, but they would have scarce made one at gathering of branches to strew Christs way; they would hardly have laid their Carpets and Garments in his Road; while his Disciples laid all under the feet of his very Beast, S. Matth. xxi. 8.

I know these practises are liable to exception. The holy Womans ointment *Judas* put in *ad quid præditio hæc?* Had not it been better sold and given to the poor? And yet our Saviour defended that Woman. So to lay my Garments under an Asses feet, What sense is for that? Yet our Saviour accepted this; and God give us grace to do those things that our Saviour will accept.

But now to the Rule: What is the Rule of these things? R. Affection, Charity. A high esteem is the Fountain and Rule of these expressions: You do not hear me say a distinct Text of holy Scripture, that is for the greater matters of the Law: There was no express Scripture for tithing of the Mint.

The

The Apostle is discoursing of these things, 'tis good to ask him, What is the *Rule* of Ceremonies; The Apostle answers, *Light of Nature*, 1 Cor. xi. 14. What is the *Rule* (again) the same Apostle answers, *Customs* the decent, rational *customs* of the Church of God, ver. 16. Nay, but what is the *Rule*? The Apostle answers, (We know not how he will please you) *Tradition Apostolick*, ver. 2. Which places if again consulted, you shall find that he speaks of such *Natural Light*, as it is *shame* not to obey: Such *Customs* which have enough in them to silence the *Contentious*, and such *Traditions* as he praises them for observing, and exhorts them to *hold fast*, and so I am upon my Text this third time, *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.*

And this the *Presbyterians* abroad, with open face acknowledge, that *much* is to be attributed to the *Antient Customs* of the Church, that it is no *Derogation* to the *Perfection of Scriptures* imployed in the determination of *Greater Articles* to leave the *less* to the *Publique Wisedome* of the Church: but 'tis not the *Interest* of ours at home, that these things should be taken notice of. Yet let *Chamiers* 9th Book *de Canone* be consulted, particularly cap. 1. p. 20. where he saith, *Et sanè illum oportet esse oris impudentissimi qui eam (Traditionem, Consuetudinem Ecclesiæ) contemnat. Nos verò illum parum abest quin sacrilegum appellemus, & quidem non tantum in Rebus levioribus (the Ceremonies) &c. sed & granioribus, &c. Et ix. cap. xviii. sect. 52. Resp. per observantias nulla dogmata intelligi, sed duntaxat variòs ritus, quorum exempla quadam subnefit* (speaking of *Origen*) *Genu flexionem, conversionem ad Orientem, Ritus sumende Eucharistiæ, &c. Atqui illa omnia Catholici (the Protestants) liberè permittunt*

mittunt Traditioni. But once more (for I appeal to the whole Book) he hath these words: *Hinc autem non sequitur Scripturas esse imperfectas, nisi prius demonstrentur dogmata Fidei ab Apostolis instituta esse quæ omnino scripta non sunt,* ix. 20, 31. For as to the *Rites*, he saies, It is not denied, *quandam ab Apostolis potuisse constitui, quæ quia non essent de essentia & natura fidei, minùs curavint scriptis referre,* ix. 19, 20. Pray let it be ponder'd.

The same reason give we. *Scripture* is not their *Rule*, because it is *above* them. Secondly, Because they are of a *mutable* condition, where the first constituent Reason of the practise proves to be such; otherwise not. There are some *Traditions* immutable, which 'tis not in the power of the Church to change, as the institution of the Lords Day fixed on the first day of the Week, and yet they bely *Calvin* if he would not have changed it to *Thursday*; but that Reason of our *Lords Resurrection* hath determined it to that day of the Week, as the *Sabbath* by another was determined to the Jew.

Here it is to be noted, when we say *Custom* or *Tradition*, we do not mean an *Arbitrary* usage of the Church, as the Gentry put on their Garments, and the Ladies their *Fancies*, meerly for *variety*, but there is discernible with it something more of moment, either the *Light of Nature*, as in all Humble Postures, Institution of Festivals, many times *Gods and Christs own Wisdome and Spirit*, in all of them *Reason* sufficient to constitute them.

For why the Apostles *Love-Feast*? Why the *Veil*? S. Jude xii. Why the *Holy Kiss*? Why the *Love-Feast*? because it ¹ Cor. xi. was *Asym Love*: the Reason is in the Name. Why the ^{10.} ² Cor. xiii. *Kiss*? the Reason is in the appellation a *Holy Kiss*, a ^{13.}

Kiss

Kiss of Charity? Why the Vail? because of Modesty and Reservedness in the Virgin in the presence of God and his holy Angels.

1 Cor. xi. *Thou shalt not adde thereto, nor diminish therefrom, establisheth Gods authority, but it doth not overthrow his Churches. Moses his Chair and the Sanedrim were put up by God to make Canons of Church and State in points not decidible by the Text.*

The Church of God always knew it her Innocent Right to ordain a Ceremony on a just Reason, before Moses was born, Gen. xxxii. 32. witness the abstaining from the *sinew* in memory of Jacobs wrestling: so do the Jews ever since observe solemn Fasts for Miriams Leprosie, Moses his breaking of the Tables, and the Death of the sons of Aaron, as the learned Usher hath noted them and more for us in his Ages of the World.

Many that are used to this day come from Gods own wisdom under the Law-Dispensation, and therefore adopted by the Church under the Gospel; the Spirit of Christ so thought it good, who is thereby thoroughly witnessed to the Jew to be their Messias, promised by the God of their Fathers, in this, that (bating the meer shadows and servile work, in whose room he hath put substantial and more glorious services) in founding his Church he hath retained all that was fit, and solemn, and decent, such as are the distinction of the Courts of the Lords House, the Orders of Priest and Levite, their hours of Prayer, their attendances by night in the Temple, seculations in times of Humiliation, the Baptism of the Infant about the eighth day, the giving of the Name at Baptism, and the Godfathers (at they used at Circumcision) the seclusion of the Woman after Child-bearing for a Moneths space, the Reading the Law in their Synagogues, their singing, the Hebrew Amen, and

and *Alleluja*, the *Dominical* day for the *Sabbath*, nay our very *Sacraments* themselves advanced from the Jews who had their *Baptism* and *Cup Eucharistical*, and many others in which God, God I say is visibly evident.

I should *surfet* you, if I should lead you as I thought to have done through every particular ; but at present it cannot be.

Only thus far have I attempted to bring all good Christians to *Truth* and *Unity*. Let no man do me that wrong past repair, to think that I have in any of this an *evil eye* toward the holy *Scripture* ; whatsoever is said I wish un-said, that is not proved thereby.

If for matters of *Faith* and practical *conscience* the holy *Scriptures* suppose the *Creed* and *Light of Nature*, it cannot *exclude* them. If for matters of *Ceremony* the *Scripture* *undertaketh* not, but commendeth to us other subordinate *authority*, let those places be *expunged*, or else we *dare* not say but what we have said. If we be judged by *Scriptures*, let us be judged by *Scriptures*, and he that maketh conscience of *one* clause, must make conscience of *all* uniformly, or else he had better never seen it. Would men but consider this.

That the holy *Scripture* is the *Rule*, I have not insisted on, because I took it for granted, and I should have been tedious in asserting what every body knows. It is a *Rule*, and *such a Rule*, that he that loves his salvation must diligently attend it : see how many *Precepts* are in it. (Think not of x or xx, but of x times xx) And as *many* as there are, I never counted my self to understand any thing, till I perfectly believed that every one of them were my *Rule* in order to salvation : so that men of unwary conversations (such as I am) cannot read them without a sigh and shaking of the head,

as *S. Austin* uses to say, *Terror me*, this and that Precept frights me, when I know how far I come short.

All that I have laboured for is, that the Scripture may not be *wrested*, that we may not lose the fruit of it by *abusing* it. Hereby will I, nill I, owning it to be a *Rule*, if it be but in this, that it is liable to be *wrested*.

But let no man strange that Scripture may be *abused*, (as profane and audacious as the *Practise* is, though I fear not commonly thought so) even by those that seem to cry it up. How do we take it, when some cry up *Liberty* to bring in *Confusion*? Do they not *abuse* Liberty thereby? The *sedition* Party do so. What think you of those that magnifie *grace* in flat opposition to *all duty*? Do they not *abuse* it? the *antinomian* does so. Nay, if one shall cry up *Jesus Christ* himself (can *Christ* be extolled too much? yea, but if he should be set up) in *opposition* to his Father, I have seen a *Curst Paper* do so. Nothing is done right, but what is *stated* according to its due limits of explication. This is the source of all our misery.

And now this objection is out of the way, how shall I bespeak you to return to the *unity* of that Church, to which, if you had once *proved* all things by *Scripture Rules*, you must at last retire: the worst that you can gain is the character of an *understanding* and *peaceable* person, a *wise* man, and a *meek* one. Why must a *Ceremony* fright you? What deformed *Multiplying-Glass* do you see that in, which of it self is *rational*, *innocent*, and *solemn*? Do we place the *substance* of Religion in them? Nay, we say indeed there is no *outward* profession without them, no *real* body but what will cast its *shadow*. Which of us would not have censur'd *Mary Magdalen* of *superstition* to have wiped *Christs feet* with

with her *hair*, and have pitied the ignorance of those men that threw their *Garments* under our Saviours *As-
ses* feet? How many counted our Saviour himself a
breaker of the Sabbath (because they consulted not
right reason) and how many a *Blasphemer* (because they
knew not his *authority*) Our Lord was not *stanch* e-
nough for those that called him *wine-bibber*, and the
holy Baptist for his *fasting* and prayer had a *Devil*.
Have we no need of *proving* all things, and take in all
the *lights* and *helps* that God vouchsafes us? Let not
Reason, Creed, Scripture, Christ, all be against us, for in
the end they will be *too hard* for us.

FINIS.
